

Approved on 01.10.2012

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC)
Meeting December 13th, 2011
Westfield Mall, Wheaton, MD 20902

Members Present: Jeannette Feldner (chair), Marian Fryer, William Moore, Janet Yu, Linda Amendt, Jim Onder, Devala Janardan, Henriot St. Gerard, Ken Nelson.

Members Absent: Matt Barry

Staff Present: Ana Lopez van Balen, Director, Mid-County Regional Center
Peter McGinnity, Wheaton Redevelopment

Guests: Tom Stanton, Limerick Pub
Dan Shevezko, Kensington Heights
Esther French, Patch
Sgt. Currie & Office Sharif Hadiyat

Call to order: Chair, Jeannette Feldner, 5:00pm

Motions: Minutes were approved

Police report: Sgt. Currie responded to questions about Wheaton being a target for crimes. His basic response was there are no violent crimes happening within the CBD, though he spoke to general crime taking place within the CBD: robbery (mostly from unlocked cars and homes); and intoxicated victims. He encouraged citizens to call since most people do not. Suggestions were made by Ms. Fryer and Mr. Nelson about writing letters to the editor specifically to commend the police.

Mid-county Director's Report: Report focused on the following topics.

- Private developer to develop in East County
- ICC is open
- Announcement from Rockefeller society to make recommendations for transportation of the BRT
- Gilchrist Center focuses on helping new residents
- WALMART to start talking to the community
- Conversation continue with the Coalition for the Fair Redevelopment of Wheaton
- Ana Mendez starting classes in January

Marketing report:

- World of Montgomery taking place this weekend.

- Matt Barry suggested pushing Wheaton as a Holiday shopping destination with at least decorations or an event.

Committee reports:

Small business: none at this time.

Communications: using list serves, starting a WUDAC newsletter, subcommittees will begin to forward their reports to this committee to create a quarterly newsletter.

Community Building – they are developing a list of civic and neighborhood associations by zipcode to communicate with the community.

Advocacy: Adam Fogel, Chief of staff for Nancy Navarro, now part of District 4 after the redistricting, regarding Bill 33-11. This applies to big box stores over 7500 sq ft and would require community input. There currently is nothing pending regarding the bill. Navarro interested in adding a ZTA to the bill to be more specific. Suggestions on the bill should be made to the PHED committee.

The committee then discussed drafted letter to CE and Council regarding Bill 33-11. Discussion focused on the need to define the meaning of the community representative. A motion made to send letter regarding Bill 33-11.

Redevelopment report: see attached.

Westfield report: N/A

Community Concerns: Dan Shevezko from Kensington Heights, spoke to the committee regarding the Costco gas station and how this connects to the CBA bill. A brief discussion emerged regarding Westfield's business kiosk and setting this up earlier.

New Business: none

Meeting Adjourned: 6:30pm.

Wheaton Redevelopment Program (WRP) Report December 23, 2011

Coalition for the Fair Redevelopment of Wheaton – LEDC, in coordination with Impact Silver Spring, Casa de Maryland, Crossway Community and Clinica Proyecto Salud, is advocating jobs, small business support, affordable housing, maintaining existing services, and multicultural diversity in redevelopment programming, uses and design. WRAC Chair Jonathan Fink sent a letter to the County Executive and to B.F. Saul Co., endorsing most elements of the Coalition's petition. Following-up on issues raised by the Coalition, Casey Wilson from the Maryland Small Business Development Center briefed WRAC members on strategies for local businesses to enhance their bottom line as they face shifting markets and redevelopment challenges.

County Housing Policy Recommendation – WRAC voted to send a letter to the County Department of Housing and Community Affairs Director advocating that the permitting process for special exceptions to zoning ordinances should be expedited for housing that meets strategic objectives of affordability, environmental sustainability and transit serviceability.

B.F. Saul Co. /Wheaton's New Downtown – Engineering working continues on traffic analysis, geo-tech testing, options for bus operations during construction, bus bay layout, and the Ennalls-Price road connection. Jones, Lang, LaSalle, a global real estate services firm, provided DGS and WMATA with a draft fiscal analysis of the B.F. Saul project.

On October 13, 2011, the Planning Board voted to include \$200,000 in its Capital Improvements Program a request to identify its office requirements in consideration of moving M-NCPPC headquarters from Silver Spring to Wheaton as part of the Wheaton's New Downtown project.

Wheaton Sector Plan – On December 15, the Planning Board voted to transmit the Plan to the full bi-county Commission.

Safeway/Patriot/Foulger Pratt – Immediately after the November 9 ground-breaking ceremony, construction began on their mixed-use project, which will bring a 59,000 sq. ft. Safeway supermarket and 486 residential units. Construction of the new Safeway itself is anticipated to take about 18 months.

Westfield Mall – WRAC voted to support Westfield's application for a parking waiver. Westfield Wheaton has applied for a parking waiver from the County so that it will not have to build new parking capacity for the incoming Costco wing. Westfield is seeking a reduction in its parking requirement from 4.5 parking spaces per 1000 square feet of "gross leasable area" to 4.0 spaces per 1000. Both the Kensington Heights and Kensington View civic Association are opposed, arguing that parking demand won't be fully known until Costco is open. Traffic consultants, retained by Westfield, counter that even with the reduction in required spaces, Westfield will still have parking supply in excess of demand. Westfield anticipates a decision in late January 2012.

Bike Share Program – WRAC voted to write a letter to the County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Director supporting Wheaton's inclusion in the proposed Montgomery County Bike Share Program. The MCDOT is submitting a grant application to the Maryland Department of Transportation for a bike sharing program similar to programs in Washington D.C.

and Arlington County, Va. The number of Wheaton bike share stations will depend upon the size of the grant awarded and identification of operating revenues. The grant will pay the capital cost of at least two Wheaton bike stations. Grant announcements are expected late January 2012 with stations coming as early as fall 2012. For more information:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/tsvtmpl.asp?url=/content/DOT/transit/commuter/index.asp>

Washington Properties – is in the process of scheduling a Preliminary Design Consultation meeting with the Department of Permitting Services for its project at 10914 Georgia Ave. The meeting helps to ensure a smooth permitting process, by identifying potential issues in advance of permit applications. At its October 20 session, the Planning Board approved Preliminary and Site plans for the 6-story, 245 residential apartment project, which includes underground parking. To view the proposed project click on the following link, and then on Agenda Item 7:

<http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2011/agenda20111020e.html>

1141 Georgia Avenue –Lowe Real Estate Enterprise Services acquired this 86,000 square foot office building, sometimes referred to as the Computer Building, on behalf of an unnamed institutional investor. The property lies directly across Georgia Avenue from the WMATA Busbays, bordered by MetroPointe to the north and Archstone Wheaton to the South. Lowe held a public meeting on December 14. Under consideration is conversion from commercial office space to residential dwelling units – approximately 200. This would be accomplished by adding up to 9 floors to the existing 5-story structure for a total of 14 stories. Some meeting attendees raised questions concerning parking provisions. Lowe indicated it is exploring the possibility of shared parking with neighboring Archstone Wheaton, which has structured parking behind its building. Some existing commercial tenants of the building, who were present for the meeting, expressed concerns with Lowe's proposed 6-month timeframe for vacating the premises. Lowe advised those attending that all proposed plans were subject to the approval of the institutional client they were representing and a decision would likely be made by early January 2012.

Alliance Residential Company – The Alliance Project, for a by-right development at the corner of Georgia and Blueridge Avenues, is on-hold. Chris Todd, the architect for Alliance, who presented preliminary concepts to WRAC, has left the company.